



Office of the  
Information Commissioner

*Freedom of information for Western Australia*

# FOI in WA Conference

*Recognising and building our FOI capacity*

10 August 2017

Officers from Western Australian State and local government agencies are invited to attend the inaugural FOI in WA Conference. The conference will assist officers and agencies to understand their responsibilities under the FOI Act, provide practical information about giving effect to the FOI Act and explore strategies for efficient, effective FOI practices for the benefit of agencies, the State and the public.

**WHERE:** Education Building at Fiona Stanley Hospital

**WHEN:** 8:45am to 4:00 pm 10 August 2017  
(registration desk open and tea and coffee available from 8:00am)

**COST:** \$99 per person

## Conference program

**Professor John McMillan AO**, the inaugural Australian Information Commissioner, will present the key note speech.

### FOI in 2017 – the challenges and opportunities to achieving the objects of the FOI Act

**Cathrin Cassarchis**, the WA State Archivist and Executive Director State Records, **Giles Nunis**, the WA Government Chief Information Officer, and **Lynsey Warbey**, Commissioner's Counsel at WA Police, join **Professor McMillan** in a panel discussion chaired by **Sven Bluemmel**, the Information Commissioner WA.

### Concurrent workshops, lectures and discussions about important issues in freedom of information in Western Australia

Through the day, participants will be able to choose between a number of concurrent sessions about freedom of information related matters in Western Australia. See over for information about some of the sessions that will be available.

For more information go to: <http://foi.wa.gov.au/conference2017>

**Register online** at: <http://www.wa.ipaa.org.au/FOI-Conference.aspx>

(payment by credit card at time of registration is preferred)

**After the morning plenary sessions, concurrent 40 minute sessions will be offered. Those sessions will include:**

<p><b>The Practicalities of Managing FOI Applications and FOI knowledge:</b> presented by officers from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet</p>	<p>What options are available to edit documents and what information needs to be maintained for effective and efficient processing of FOI applications? This session will explore available technologies to edit documents and the types of FOI records that need to be accessible for future reference by FOI Coordinators.</p>
<p><b>Quality information, quality archives, and the ethics of online access:</b> presented by officers from the State Records Office</p>	<p>The State Records Commission Standards, issued under the State Records Act 2000, provide a robust framework for the management of government information and public access to information of permanent value. As part of a new service delivery model, the State Records Office is making archival information increasingly available online, but this comes with its own set of ethical considerations which will also be explored in this presentation.</p>
<p><b>Interpersonal Skills for FOI Co-ordinators;</b> presented by Su Lloyd, Principal Legal Officer, Office of the Information Commissioner</p>	<p>This session will help you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• better understand your personal communication style and preferences;</li> <li>• develop active listening skills;</li> <li>• learn some effective written and verbal communication techniques; and</li> <li>• identify the key elements of a successful encounter with an access applicant.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Key recent FOI decisions in WA:</b> presented by Sven Bluemmel, Information Commissioner</p>	<p>Fewer than one percent of FOI decisions are subject to external review, with even fewer proceeding to a formal decision. These matters tend to be complex or precedent-setting. This session will review recent decisions of interest, including those related to major projects (such as the Children's Hospital and Freight Link) as well as those dealing with whether a person's image constitutes personal information and whether personal details on a statutory declaration are exempt from disclosure.</p>
<p><b>Dealing with requests for CCTV footage:</b> presented by Sven Bluemmel, Information Commissioner</p>	<p>CCTV footage is a document to which the FOI Act applies. In this session the Commissioner will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies for dealing with requests for CCTV footage.</li> <li>• What is personal information in the context of CCTV footage</li> <li>• What is the relevance of an agency's capacity to edit the footage</li> <li>• Recent decisions involving requests for CCTV footage</li> </ul>
<p><b>Considering the exemptions related to confidentiality and legal professional privilege:</b> presented by officers from the State Solicitors Office</p>	<p>Hear from the State Solicitors Office regarding the exemptions in clause 8 (concerning confidential communications) and clause 7 (concerning legal professional privilege).</p>
<p><b>Deliberating on deliberative process – clause 6 of Schedule 1 to the FOI Act:</b> presented by Rachel Crute from the Office of the Information Commissioner</p>	<p>This session will consider what is required to establish the exemption in clause 6, including an analysis of what constitutes the deliberative processes of an agency and how to apply the public interest test.</p>
<p><b>Perspectives on the decision to refuse to deal with an application</b></p>	<p>What are the practicalities and requirements for making a decision that an application is too big to deal with? This session will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When should you clarify the scope of a request with an applicant?</li> <li>• How do you go about negotiating scope with applicants?</li> <li>• What are 'reasonable steps' to help the applicant reduce the amount of work needed to deal with the application?</li> <li>• What is an unreasonable and substantial diversion of an agency's resources?</li> <li>• What should a section 20 notice of decision include?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Navigating applications that include personal information</b></p>	<p>Government documents include a lot of personal information about individuals – including members of the public and agency officers. An application that includes this kind of information can appear complicated. This session will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is personal information?</li> <li>• Dealing with personal information about officers of an agency</li> <li>• Strategies to simplify dealing with this kind of application</li> </ul>
<p><b>The process of considering disclosure outside the FOI Act</b></p>	<p>Officers from agencies with policies for disclosure of certain documents outside of the FOI Act discuss issues associated with considering this type of disclosure.</p>